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THE BRAZILIAN MILITARY: ITS  
ROLE IN COUNTER-DRUG ACTIVITIES

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role of Brazil's military in counter-drug operations. Drug trafficking in Brazil poses a growing threat to the country's national security, but Brazil's physical size and limited resources have hindered the government's counter-drug efforts. The Brazilian military has been reluctant to assume a more significant role in counter-drug operations. The thesis argues that external, internal, and institutional pressures are driving the Brazilian military to expand its counter-drug role. The thesis recommends that the Brazilian military expand its current support role in counter-drug operations, but that it avoid a direct role in law enforcement operations. The United States should support this expanded role, but only to the extent that such a role does not threaten the further consolidation of democracy in Brazil.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. THE DILEMMA AND THE THESIS

Since the late 1980s, drug trafficking in Brazil has become a serious problem. The country is a major transshipment route for drugs destined for Europe and the United States and is gradually becoming a large market for illicit drugs. Brazil is also an important producer of ether and acetone (used in the production of cocaine HCl), as well as a transit route for chemicals from the United States and Europe that are illegally diverted to Bolivia and Colombia. Additionally, drug-related violence and corruption is becoming more evident in Brazil's cities.

Brazilian officials are aware of the increasing problem. However, the country's physical size and limited resources have hindered the government's counter-drug efforts. For example, the Departamento de Policia Federal (DPF), a force of 7,000 personnel, has been tasked with taking the lead role in Brazil's counter-drug effort. This role consists of patrolling 9,000 miles of borders with Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, the three primary cocaine producing countries in the region. The DPF is also responsible for attacking the drug trade in Brazil's cities and for interdicting drug shipments through the country. DPF officials readily admit

that they are undermanned and ill-equipped to make real progress in defeating the drug traffickers.<sup>1</sup>

Brazil's armed forces consist of approximately 270,000 personnel. These forces have significant capabilities including fixed and rotary wing aircraft; maritime surveillance assets; a sophisticated command and control, and intelligence network; and the infrastructure to adequately support forces deployed to the field. These capabilities indicate that the Brazilian military could considerably enhance the country's counter-drug efforts, particularly the work of the DPF. However, the Brazilian military has been reluctant to assume a significant role in the country's counter-drug strategy.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the role of Brazil's armed forces in counter-drug operations. Specifically, it analyzes the military's reluctance to assume a counter-drug mission, despite a number of reasons that indicate the military could benefit from greater participation in counter-drug operations.

With the end of the cold war and the decline of military governments in Latin America, external threats to Brazil have all but disappeared. Consequently, without a well defined external threat and faced with fiscal constraints,

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<sup>1</sup> "Drug Trade Flourishing in Northern Brazil," The Washington Post, 13 August 1991.

Brazilians are questioning the rationale for maintaining and modernizing a military that no longer has a significant role. Concurrently, as the drug problem worsens in Brazil, the government of Brazil (GOB) is increasing its efforts to counter the problem. These efforts include designating more financial resources to the problem and elevating the issue to the level of national importance.

In examining the Brazilian drug problem and the future role of the military in Brazil, it is apparent that the Brazilian military, for purposes of both national security and preservation of their institution, could become more involved in Brazilian counter-drug efforts. However, as previously mentioned, the Brazilian military has refused to play a larger role in counter-drug operations. The explanation for this is the major research question to be solved.

My thesis is that external, internal and institutional pressures are driving the Brazilian military to expand its counter-drug role. External pressure is represented by the United States and its international counter-drug policy. Internal is defined as occurring from within Brazil, such as the government providing encouragement for greater military participation in counter-drug operations, as the drug problem gradually becomes a national security problem. Institutional refers to events occurring within the



Brazilian military. For example, faced with fiscal constraints and no viable threat, the military's leadership may be pressured from within to accept the counter-drug role in order to preserve the military institution.

External pressure is a necessary, but insufficient condition, for the expansion of the military's counter-drug role. However, it can influence both internal and institutional pressures.

#### **B. THE PURPOSE OF THE THESIS, MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS & METHODOLOGY**

In order to present a comprehensive discussion of the relationship between Brazil's drug problem and the role of the armed forces in the country's counter-drug strategy, a number of questions need to be addressed. First, why is this thesis relevant to a military officer and student of Latin American affairs? Brazil's growing drug problem is not only a threat to Brazilian society, but the country's increasing role as a production and transshipment route for drugs destined for the United States represents a threat to U.S. national security.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, since 1982, due to the level of sophistication in the drug trafficking organizations, the United States recognized that military

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<sup>2</sup> National Security Strategy of the United States, The White House, August 1991, 17. This strategy states that the international trade in drugs is a major threat to U.S. national security.

involvement was necessary to conduct effective counter-drug operations in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Following this rationale for involving the U.S. military in counter-drug operations, the United States' counter-drug strategy in South America encourages Latin American countries to actively engage their armed forces in narcotics control.<sup>4</sup>

Consequently, the Brazilian reluctance to become more involved in counter-drug operations needs to be better understood by U.S. policy makers in order to make the U.S. counter-drug strategy in Brazil more effective. For the Latin Americanist, analyzing and understanding the Brazilian military's reluctance to assume a greater role in counter-drug operations provides an insight into the identity crisis that is plaguing the majority of Latin American militaries in the post-Cold War era. Furthermore, the study provides a perspective on the future role of the military in Brazilian society and another case study on the positive and negative aspects of involving South American militaries in counter-drug operations.

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<sup>3</sup> Committee on Government Operations, Military Assistance to Civilian Narcotics Law Enforcement: An Interim Report, Union Calendar No. 576, House of Representatives, Washington, DC, 28 September 1982, p. 1-3.

<sup>4</sup> Melvyn Levitsky, The Andean Strategy to Control Cocaine, United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Current Policy No. 1287, Washington, DC, 1990.

Second, it is important to analyze the scope of the drug problem in Brazil and determine whether the severity of the problem warrants the use of Brazil's armed forces in a counter-drug strategy. The literature and case studies providing the paradigm to conduct this analysis are limited to similar initiatives in the Andean nations (Bolivia, Colombia and Peru) and the United States. In these countries drug trafficking was considered a threat to national security and the armed forces were incorporated into counter-drug operations. Therefore, generalizations from these cases can be utilized in analyzing the Brazilian case.

Third, and related to the previous question, is identifying what internal, institutional and other pressures are pressing the Brazilian military to assume a larger role in counter-drug operations. Utilizing the key words "Brazil", "drugs" and "military", a search of Brazilian and American periodicals was conducted. Additionally a number of U.S. government officials were interviewed and queried as to what entities were exerting pressure on the Brazilian military to become more involved in counter-drug operations. It was discovered that initially, external pressure from the United States was the primary source of pressure for Brazilian military involvement in counter-drug operations. More recently (1991-1992), the emphasis for a change in the

military's position on the issue is essentially coming from the Brazilian government and from the military itself.

Fourth, the study examines the Brazilian military. Specifically, it focuses on whether the counter-drug mission is a legitimate role for the Brazilian armed forces. It analyzes competing arguments for more extensive use of the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations in the context of three major issues:

- The severity of the Brazilian drug problem.
- Brazilian civil-military relations.
- The importance of the Brazilian military as an institution.

Analyzing the arguments in this manner is not only important for understanding the Brazilian perspective on the issue, but is also necessary for formulating a U.S. policy that appreciates the sensitivities involved in the Brazilian military assuming a larger role in counter-drug operations.

Finally, the study examines potential roles for the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations. The examination reflects the domestic political concerns of Brazil and the foreign policy concerns of the United States.

The conclusion of this thesis will examine the answers to these questions and demonstrate how they support the primary prediction of this thesis: that external, internal



and institutional pressures are driving the Brazilian military to expand its counter-drug role.

### **C. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The thesis is broken down into an Introduction, Conclusion, and three distinct parts. The first part (Sections II and III) provides an overview of the drug problem in Brazil and an examination of how the government's drug policies have changed with the increasing severity of the drug problem. Section II reviews and defines the drug problem in Brazil and discusses possible future trends for the Brazilian drug problem. Section III examines Brazilian responses to the drug problem by analyzing specific Brazilian counter-drug initiatives. The section concludes by presenting a discussion on whether current Brazilian initiatives are sufficient to at least slow down the country's expanding drug problem.

The second part (Sections IV and V) examines external, internal and institutional pressures for a greater Brazilian military role in counter-drug activities. Section IV analyzes indirect and direct pressures applied by the United States and highlights the sources of pressure from within Brazilian political society. Section V provides a comprehensive examination of the Brazilian military and the drug problem. It focuses on the major issues and arguments

that are driving the military's institutional debate over assuming a larger role in counter-drug operations.

The third part (Sections VI and VII) defines a number of options for the Brazilian military and the United States for implementing an effective counter-drug strategy in Brazil. Section VI outlines potential missions for a Brazilian military that assumes a more significant role in counter-drug efforts, and briefly examines other Brazilian counter-drug initiatives that could complement these potential missions. Section VII focuses on what role the United States should play in assisting Brazil in developing an effective counter-drug strategy. This includes if and how the United States should encourage and assist in defining a greater role for the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations.

The conclusion summarizes the findings and provides recommendations for further research.

#### **D. SOURCES**

Although literature on the Brazilian military and its role in Brazilian society is quite abundant, there is a lack of published material on the Brazilian drug problem and the role of the Brazilian military in countering that problem. This shortfall is attributed to the fact that until recently (1987-1992) the problem did not exist or was ignored. Despite the lack of material providing a comprehensive

analysis of the problem, there exists a large amount of information concerning more specific aspects of the problem.

Consequently, the primary sources for this study were articles from periodicals published between 1986 and March 1992. The study relies heavily on Brazilian articles and broadcasts translated and published in the Latin America: Foreign Broadcast Information Service. A number of Brazilian journals and periodicals that were not translated were also utilized. During April of 1992 the author travelled to Washington, D.C. and interviewed a number of government officials. Agencies visited included the United States Department of State, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and various offices within the Department of Defense.

## II. REVIEWING & DEFINING THE DRUG PROBLEM IN BRAZIL

### A. DEFINING THE BRAZILIAN DRUG PROBLEM

The following excerpt from the 1992 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR) provides a general assessment of the Brazilian drug problem:

Brazil is a significant transshipment country for Bolivian, Peruvian and Colombian cocaine destined for the U.S. and Europe. It is also an important producer of ether and acetone, which can be diverted from legitimate commerce for the production of cocaine Hcl, as well as a transit route for chemicals from the U.S. and Europe illegally diverted to Bolivia and to a lesser extent Colombia.<sup>5</sup>

The INCSR assessment indicates the Brazilian drug problem is primarily attributed to the country's function as a supplier in the international drug trade. Therefore, examining the scope of Brazil's function as a "supplier country" is necessary.

Until 1989 Brazilian officials recognized the drug problem in the neighboring countries of Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, but generally dismissed the fact that Brazil was experiencing a drug problem of any significance. This complacency was most likely attributed to a number of factors. For example, Brazil's vast Amazon jungle region provides a natural buffer between the borders of Brazil's

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<sup>5</sup> INCSR, 1992.



drug producing neighbors and Brazil's eastern cities.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, Brazil has a number of other national problems such as the highest foreign debt in the developing world, and a severely depressed economy.<sup>7</sup>

In 1989, Brazilian officials began to recognize the drug problem. That year, Brazilian Federal Police (DPF) discovered an increasing number of cocaine processing laboratories and made more cocaine seizures. In November 1989, the Federal Police in Sao Paulo uncovered a new shipping route used by Colombia's Medellin Cartel, the most powerful drug trafficking organization in the world. The DPF reported that the cartel leaders had organized a new route through Brazil to distribute cocaine in the markets of the United States and Europe. According to the Sao Paulo Federal Narcotics Department Police Chief, strong repression efforts against drug traffickers in Colombia had forced them

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<sup>6</sup> In 1987 the Brazilian government clearly recognized the drug trafficking threat along its border, but anti-drug efforts were limited to border sealing operations and the problem was not considered significant. See "Military to Strengthen Border Against Traffickers," Madrid EFE, in Spanish, 30 March 1987, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service: Latin America (FBIS), 2 April 1987, 2-3; and "Police Increase Struggle Against Drug Trafficking," Madrid EFE, in Spanish, 11 June 1987, translated in FBIS, 24 June 1987, 2-3.

<sup>7</sup> "Region: External Debt Update," Latin American Regional Report, September 1991.

to find new routes and methods of trafficking cocaine to the United States and Europe.<sup>8</sup>

In January of 1991 it was reported that Brazil had become a paradise for drug traffickers from Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, who have established a modern transport, storage, distribution and export network in Brazil. According to Sergio Sakon, head of the planning department of the Federal Police's anti-drug division, this illegal network is ideally supported by Brazil's industrial parks, hotels, road and air links with neighboring countries, seaports, airports and a sophisticated black market.<sup>9</sup>

Published statistics on drug seizures indicate that Brazil has become the second-largest exporter of cocaine in the world.<sup>10</sup> The map of the Brazilian drug trade is as follows:

The main entry points for cocaine -- some 90 percent comes from Colombia and Bolivia -- are small border towns in the states of Acre, Amazonas, Rondonia, Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. It is stored at remote farms in Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul before being transported to the main cities, principally Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro,

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<sup>8</sup> "Police Uncover 'New' Medellin Cartel Drug Route," Brasilia Radio Nacional de Amazonia, in Portuguese, 29 November 1989, translated in FBIS, 30 November 1989, 44-45.

<sup>9</sup> "Brazil a 'Paradise' for Drug Traffickers," Latin American Regional Reports: Brazil, 10 January 1991, 3. The article relies extensively on reports from the Brazilian newspapers Jornal do Brasil and Folha de Sao Paulo.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

for distribution to other parts of Brazil or shipment to the US and Europe.<sup>11</sup>

By 1991, Brazil had clearly become a major transshipment route for cocaine destined for the United States.

There has also been some concern in Brazil over certain regions in the Amazon becoming centers for coca cultivation. This concern is primarily based on fact that a lower quality coca leaf -- epadu -- can be grown easily in the Amazon region.<sup>12</sup> With tougher coca eradication and interdiction programs in the Andean countries, it was feared that epadu would become a viable alternative for the traditional and higher quality Andean coca leaf. However, there is no evidence of this occurring at any significant rate.<sup>13</sup>

What is the effect on Brazilian society of Brazil's role as a transshipment route for cocaine? Evidence indicates that there has been a growth in consumer demand for drugs in Brazil. In July of 1990, a Sao Paulo newspaper stated that drug consumption had increased in the Sao Paulo state and that a major drug organization distributing a "crack"

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> "Amazon Indians Grow Coca for Drug Traffickers," Veja, in Portuguese, 17 August 1988, translated in FBIS, 18 August 1988, 34.

<sup>13</sup> The NNICC Report, United States Drug Enforcement Agency, 1991, 11, and the INCSR, United States Department of State, 1992.

derivative to the local population had been discovered.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout 1990, Brazilian federal, state and local police began targeting drug organizations operating and distributing cocaine in Brazil's major cities.<sup>15</sup>

These reports of a growing Brazilian drug abuse problem were confirmed by a number of private studies that concluded that Brazil has a growing marijuana problem and increasing levels of cocaine abuse among the middle and upper class.<sup>16</sup>

In mid-1990 President Fernando Collor de Mello directed the Ministry of Education to develop drug awareness programs for inclusion in the curriculum of Brazilian public schools.<sup>17</sup>

Consequently, by the end of 1990, it was quite apparent that Brazil's drug problem, as a "supplier country," had escalated. The drug traffickers were now using Brazil as a conduit to Brazilian, as well as American and European, consumer drug markets.

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<sup>14</sup> "Details of Drug Trafficking," O Estado de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 15 July 1990, translated in FBIS, 18 July 1990, 35.

<sup>15</sup> "Rio de Janeiro Drug Trafficker Arrested," Rio de Janeiro Globo Television, in Portuguese, 5 January 1990, translated in FBIS, 5 January 1990, 57; "Increased Drug Production in Sao Paulo State," O Estado de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 6 May 1990, translated in FBIS, 9 May 1990, 37; and "Rio Police Deliver Heavy Blow to Drug Dealers," Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television, in Portuguese, 23 May 1990, translated in FBIS, 25 May 1990, 16.

<sup>16</sup> INCSR, 1991, 92.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

As Brazil's drug problem began to escalate the social consequences of the drug trade appeared in Brazilian society. Drug-related violence began appearing at the local, state and federal levels. For example, in February of 1990 the Federal Police Department in Mato Grosso do Sul confirmed that federal and highway policemen were involved in a cocaine traffickers ring.<sup>18</sup> In Ponta Pora, a town in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, regarded by the Federal Police as a trading post for all the Bolivian cocaine destined for local consumption and for the largest Brazilian urban centers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, ranchers, businessmen and members of the civil, military and federal police have been implicated in drug trafficking.<sup>19</sup>

In 1991, Brazil's burgeoning drug problem began receiving national attention when a federal deputy (a member of the lower house of Brazil's Congress) was implicated in drug trafficking. The incident, which occurred in the state of Rondonia, located in western Brazil adjacent to Bolivia, triggered a congressional investigation that included a two day trip by the committee to Rondonia. Among other things,

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<sup>18</sup> "Policemen Caught Trafficking in Mato Grosso," Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television, in Portuguese, 19 February 1990, translated in FBIS, 21 February 1990, 35.

<sup>19</sup> "Border State Drug Trade, Corruption Detailed," O Globo, in Portuguese, 25 February 1990, translated in FBIS, 28 February 1990, 27-29.



the investigation produced a list of 31 politicians, magistrates, city mayors and businessmen allegedly involved in drug trafficking.<sup>20</sup>

Brazil's cities are being inundated with drug abuse and the violence and corruption associated with the trade. According to police, the city of Corumba, located on the river Paraguay adjacent to Bolivia, has an incidence of crime characteristic of a city three times its size. Seventy percent of these crimes are drug related.<sup>21</sup> Heavily armed drug gangs control the slums of Rio de Janeiro and drug traffickers are raiding military armories in Sao Paulo.<sup>22</sup>

In summary, by the end of 1991, Brazil's drug problem was clearly growing. The immediate danger was the country's function as a transshipment route for illegal drugs, but the growth of the Brazilian consumer market was becoming a primary concern for the government.

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<sup>20</sup> "Brazil's Drug War Extends to Its Congress," The Christian Science Monitor, 10 September 1991, 5; and "Becoming a Major Route to Europe," Latin American Weekly Report, 5 December 1991, 5.

<sup>21</sup> "Just Say Who: Brazilian Border Town Battles Cocaine Trade and, Now, Drug Use," The Wall Street Journal, 18 October 1991, 4.

<sup>22</sup> "Drug Traffickers Raiding Armories," O Estado de Sao Paulo, 3 February 1992, 3.

## B. ASSESSING THE SEVERITY OF THE BRAZILIAN DRUG PROBLEM

The level of drug-related corruption and violence occurring in Brazil is significantly less than the high levels found in Colombia and Peru. However, drug-related corruption and violence are definitely on the rise in Brazil. United States government officials interviewed in conducting this study estimated that Brazil would have a severe drug problem by the end of the decade<sup>23</sup>, and one Brazilian DPF official speculated that in ten or twenty years from now, Brazil could be another Colombia.<sup>24</sup>

Brazil's drug problem is getting worse and it is reaching a level of severity that could define it as a national security problem. Waltraud Morales provides the following definition of national security:

National security...first entails defense in its narrowest concept -- the protection of a nation's people from physical attack; and second, the more extensive concept of the protection of political and economic interests considered essential to the fundamental values and the vitality of the state.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> United States Government Officials, interview by author, Washington, D.C., 29 March - 3 April 1992.

<sup>24</sup> "Just Say Who:...", The Wall Street Journal, 18 October 1991, 4.

<sup>25</sup> Waltraud Morales, "The War on Drugs: A New U.S. National Security Doctrine?", Third World Quarterly, July 1989, 165.

The United States National Security Strategy defines the international trade in drugs as a threat to U.S. national security as follows:

No threat does more danger to our national values and institutions, and the domestic violence generated by the trade in drugs is all too familiar.<sup>26</sup>

The Brazilian drug problem clearly fits these definitions, but the Brazilian government has not yet declared the drug issue a problem of national security. This is due primarily to a number of other issues of national importance. For example, Brazil is gripped by serious economic problems that pose a threat to national stability and limit the allocation of financial resources to deal with other national issues. Brazil's monthly inflation rate is approximately 25 percent (the annual rate for 1990 was 1,585 percent); foreign external debt is \$120 billion; economic growth, as measured by real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was -4.6 percent in 1990, and unemployment in some of the major cities was as high as 13 percent.<sup>27</sup> Clearly, Brazil's economic woes represent Brazil's most serious national problem.

In summary, Brazil's drug problem is getting worse and that the country's economic problems are hampering the

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<sup>26</sup> National Security Strategy of the United States, 1991, 7.

<sup>27</sup> Foreign Economic Trends - Brazil, American Embassy, Brazil, 16 December 1991, 1-13.

government's ability to address the drug issue. Despite these economic limitations, Brazil has responded to the drug problem, and as the situation has worsened, Brazil has increased its counter-drug efforts. However, the drug problem in Brazil is growing exponentially and Brazilian responses to the drug problem may be too little too late.

### III. BRAZILIAN RESPONSES TO THE DRUG PROBLEM: ARE THEY SUFFICIENT?

#### A. A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF BRAZILIAN COUNTER-DRUG INITIATIVES

The Brazilian government's responses to the country's drug problem have generally expanded as the drug problem worsened. When Brazilian officials considered their country's drug problem as something occurring on the distant western Amazon frontier, along the country's borders with Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, counter-drug initiatives were limited to increasing military and federal police patrols in the border areas. Additionally, agreements were made with bordering countries to cooperate with each other against the drug traffickers.

When it became apparent that Brazil's drug problem had spread to the country's major cities and that it was growing exponentially, Brazilian officials began proposing counter-drug legislation, strengthening the federal police and seeking funding for counter-drug programs from external sources.

In summary, Brazilian counter-drug initiatives since 1985 have emphasized the following:

- The Federal Police.
- The Armed Forces.
- Government legislation.
- International and regional cooperation.



This chapter will examine the impact of these counter-drug initiatives both separately and as a comprehensive drug strategy. It seeks to determine whether current Brazilian counter-drug initiatives are sufficient to deal effectively with the country's drug problem.

## **B. THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL POLICE**

The Departamento de Policia Federal (DPF), a force of 7,000 personnel,<sup>28</sup> has been tasked with taking the lead role in Brazil's counter-drug effort. This role consists of patrolling 9,000 miles of borders with Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, and the thousands of miles of navigable rivers and jungle that make up Brazil's vast Amazon region.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, the DPF is also responsible for attacking the drug trade in Brazil's cities and for interdicting drug shipments that are exported from the country.

The DPF is undermanned and ill equipped to patrol such a vast area. If it concentrated primarily on counter-drug operations, it would leave other criminal activities unattended. For example, the federal police detachment in Corumba has one detective and 19 men to patrol 200 miles of

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<sup>28</sup> Of these 7,000 personnel, approximately 600 are assigned to the Narcotics Unit. INCSR: 1992, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Brazil's Amazon region represents approximately 42 percent of the country's territory and it is estimated that five percent of the nation's population inhabit the area.

border with Bolivia. The federal police chief in Corumba states his dilemma as follows:

The hard truth is that the federal police doesn't have the structure to work in Corumba. I can't at the same time dismantle refineries, be at the police station, patrol the borders and bring down more than 100 bocas [retail outlets selling cocaine] in Corumba.<sup>30</sup>

The Amazon state of Rondonia, which shares a border with Bolivia consisting of 860 miles of uncharted rain forest and rivers, has 140 federal agents. These agents have no aircraft or radios and in 1990 did not have enough money to pay for gas, which immobilized the agents for six months.<sup>31</sup> According to a US government official, the lack of an air surveillance network in western Brazil allows the traffickers to fly over the area with impunity. Additionally, the DPF is not adequately equipped with boats to effectively patrol Brazil's extensive river network.<sup>32</sup>

Although the DPF is currently not sufficiently manned or equipped to combat Brazil's drug problem, progress has been made in improving their capabilities. In 1991, the Brazilian government announced that it planned to hire approximately 2,000 more federal police and the DPF received

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<sup>30</sup> "Just Say Who:....," The Wall Street Journal, 18 October 1991, 4.

<sup>31</sup> "Drug Trade Flourishing in Northern Brazil," The Washington Post, 13 August 1991, 10.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Government Official, interview by author, Washington, DC, 30 March 1992.

funds from the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse to buy airport x-ray units, police radios and jeeps.<sup>33</sup>

Dr. Romeu Tuma, director of the federal police, summarized the DPF's war on the drug traffickers as follows:

People arrested and drugs seized have doubled these past two years, but there is a long way to go. To make real progress, you need men not miracles.<sup>34</sup>

### C. THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

Brazil currently maintains about 270,000 men in the armed forces; 183,000 in the army, 46,000 in the navy and 45,000 in the air force. Capabilities and equipment of the armed forces include:

- Modern fixed and rotary wing aircraft for attack, defense, surveillance and troop lift missions.
- Blue-water navy with a maritime defense and surveillance mission and a limited brown water capability.
- Conventional and unconventional land forces trained for jungle and urban warfare.
- Sophisticated command and control and intelligence capability.
- Logistics infrastructure able to adequately support forces in the field.

The military's role in combatting Brazil's drug problem has primarily consisted of border sealing operations,

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<sup>33</sup> INCSR, 1992, 4, and "Brazil Wilderness is Drug Highway," The New York Times, 14 April 1991, 11.

<sup>34</sup> "South America's War Against Drugs," The Miami Herald, 8 December 1991, 14.

support to the DPF and some air surveillance. The largest visible support the military has been providing is along the country's Amazon borders.<sup>35</sup>

In 1986 the Brazilian government announced the Calha Norte project. The project called for the establishment of small army bases along the country's borders with Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana. The project sought to draw settlers to these remote regions. The project also called for the construction of roads and airstrips to provide access into the remote northern Amazon region. A similar presence already exists along the borders with Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, Argentina and Uruguay. A number of reasons have been given for the implementation of the Calha Norte project, but the most plausible are as follows:

- The project justified the military's existence and gave it a more "professional" role by linking it to national development plans. Consequently, government budgetary support for the military would be ensured.
- The project was a response to the fear that guerrilla and drug-related violence might spill over from the Andean region.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> "Military to Strengthen Border Against Traffickers," Madrid EFE, in Spanish, 30 March 1987, translated in FBIS, 2 April 1987, D2.

<sup>36</sup> Andrew Hurrell, "The Politics of Amazonian Deforestation," The Journal of Latin American Studies, February 1991, 206.

In February 1991, after a Brazilian outpost along the Colombian border had been attacked by drug traffickers/guerrillas, the Brazilian government allocated \$1.3 million to continue the Calha Norte project and strengthen Brazil's presence along the Colombian border.<sup>37</sup>

According to U.S. government officials, Calha Norte and other Brazilian military operations along the country's Amazonian borders have no impact on the drug traffickers. Ironically, the primary reason is lack of presence. The military's border outposts are manned by approximately 20 - 30 personnel. Of this group only ten are combat troops and the other 20 are support personnel, such as engineers and doctors. Battalion-sized garrisons, such as the one at Tabatinga, on the border near Leticia, Colombia, have been formed to support the more remote outposts. These garrisons lack any dedicated air lift to rapidly deploy additional troops to a crisis area. The personnel at these outposts do not actively patrol for drug traffickers, but if traffickers are encountered, they are apprehended and turned over to the DPF.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> "Colombian Border Incident Turns Sour," Latin American Weekly Report, 28 March 1991, 3. Three Brazilian soldiers were killed and nine others wounded. It was also reported that all of the garrisons weapons were stolen.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Government Official, interview by author, Washington, DC, 1 April 1992.



By manning the border outposts with local conscripts the military has developed an extensive intelligence network in the Amazon border region.<sup>39</sup> In March 1992, the Brazilian military moved a second infantry brigade into the Amazon (approximately 500 troops), including aviation assets to increase surveillance and mobility of troops.<sup>40</sup> The move was more likely a response to a number of border incidents along the Venezuelan frontier than it was a response to drug trafficking.<sup>41</sup>

The military's support of the DPF has come primarily in the form of airlift. In May of 1990, the army and air force provided airlift for the DPF in an operation to dynamite clandestine airstrips utilized by drug traffickers in the state of Roraima.<sup>42</sup> In addition to air support, the military has provided training to the DPF. This training

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> U.S. Government Official, interview by author, Washington, DC, 2 April 1992.

<sup>41</sup> "Army, Police, Add Patrols on Venezuelan Border," Rede Globo Television, in Portuguese, 6 February 1992, translated in FBIS, 7 February 1992, 22.

<sup>42</sup> "Destruction of Clandestine Airstrips to Begin," Brasilia Radio Nacional de Amazonia Network, in Portuguese, 2 May 1990, translated in FBIS, 3 May 1990, 32, and "Armed Forces Role in Anti-drug Fight Discussed," O Globo, in Portuguese, 26 June 1990, translated in FBIS, 28 June 1990, 28, states that the air force provides pilots and planes for operations carried out by the federal police.

includes command, control and communications, small unit tactics and jungle warfare.<sup>43</sup>

In review, it is apparent that the Brazilian military is playing a small role in the country's counter-drug efforts. Only 18,000 troops are assigned to the military's Amazon command,<sup>44</sup> thus only seven percent of Brazil's military is committed to 50 percent of the territory. These numbers suggest that the Brazilian military could deploy more assets to the region for counter-drug support.

#### D. INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL COOPERATION & GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

The Brazilian government has always pursued a policy of international and regional cooperation in counter-drugs. In 1987, Brazil signed agreements with Bolivia and Venezuela to cooperate against the drug traffickers.<sup>45</sup> In 1989, Brazil also agreed to increase cooperation with Colombia on controlling drug trafficking along the border.<sup>46</sup> Brazil

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<sup>43</sup> U.S. Government Official, interview by author, Washington, DC 2 April 1992.

<sup>44</sup> "CMA Chief Views Army Role in Region," Folha de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 15 January 1992, translated in FBIS, 27 February 1992, 18.

<sup>45</sup> "Joint Anti-drug Program to Begin with Bolivia," Madrid EFE, in Spanish, 24 April 1987, translated in FBIS, 20 April 1987, 5.

<sup>46</sup> "Itamaraty Spokesman on Drug effort with Colombia," Brasilia Domestic Service, in Portuguese, 26 October 1989, translated in FBIS, 30 October 1989, 72.

and the United States signed an agreement on the anti-narcotics struggles in September 1986, but it only became policy with a presidential decree in July 1991.<sup>47</sup>

The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations supported the Cartagena anti-drug summit held in 1989. Brazil has received counter-drug funds and equipment from the United States, Europe and the United Nations. Nonetheless, cooperation agreements signed by Brazil concerning the drug trade are still at the incipient stage. Cooperation consists primarily of intelligence sharing between Brazil's federal police organization and its counterparts in the countries with which Brazil has signed cooperative anti-drug agreements. Although the Brazilian government recognizes the transnational character of the drug trade, it has refused any counter-drug assistance that seeks to militarize the country's counter-drug efforts.

Domestically, the government of Brazil introduced a comprehensive anti-drug bill to Congress in 1991. This bill includes stiff provisions regarding all facets of the drug trade.<sup>48</sup> Also, the Congressional Committee of Inquiry on

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<sup>47</sup> "Government on Anti-drug Struggle with U.S.," Voz do Brasilia Network, in Portuguese, 14 August 1991, translated in FBIS, 15 August 1991, 2.

<sup>48</sup> Congress Examines New Federal Drug Law, unclassified message (DTG 281514Z OCT 91), American Embassy, Brasilia, Brazil, 1.

Narco-trafficking investigated the country's drug problem from April 1991 until November 1991. The committee's final report called for the following:

- A national drug policy
- Increased law enforcement resources
- Passage of the comprehensive drug legislation.<sup>49</sup>

The Brazilian government continued to cooperate with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to detect, monitor and seize major diversions of precursor chemicals from both Brazilian manufacturers and foreign sources.<sup>50</sup>

#### **E. ANALYSIS**

In reviewing this chapter, it is quite apparent that the government of Brazil is aware of and reacting to its growing drug problem. Strengthening anti-drug legislation and bilateral agreements with other nations are positive first steps in developing a national drug strategy. However, as so simply stated by the head of Brazil's federal police, "men not miracles are needed" to counter Brazil's drug problem.

The DPF has the constitutional responsibility for enforcing the anti-drug law, but it is undermanned and ill-equipped. In contrast, the Brazilian military has the manpower and the equipment necessary to enhance the

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<sup>49</sup> INCSR: 1992, 4.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

country's law enforcement capabilities, but lacks the legal basis to enforce the law. The DPF has been targeted for additional funding. Given limited resources ,it seems that the military stands to lose in the budget battle. Simply, the DPF is strengthened at the expense of the military. This is one of the dilemmas the Brazilian military faces by opposing a greater role in counter-drug operations.

However, the Brazilian military currently has the capability to conduct more effective counter-drug operations than the DPF. This fact combined with the scale and severity of Brazil's drug problem indicates that the Brazilian military should play a larger role in counter-drug operations. This role does not have to include extending powers of arrest and seizure to the military, but should focus more on better utilizing the military's capabilities to assist the DPF in their law enforcement efforts.

The U.S. model is instructive. The U.S. Coast Guard takes advantage of the U.S. Navy's greater capabilities by multiplying their force capability through the use of Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETS). The LEDETS are a small group of Coast Guard law enforcement officials attached to naval vessels to carry out all arrests and seizures upon discovery of illegal activity. Thus the Brazilian military could similarly enhance the DPF's ability to combat drug trafficking.



The Brazilian military continues to resist any increase in their counter-drug role. However, as illustrated by the DPF and military's inevitable battle for funding, there are pressures for the military to become more involved in counter-drug operations. What these pressures are, and where they come from, is the topic of discussion for Part II of this study.

#### IV. EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL PRESSURES

##### A. EXTERNAL PRESSURE: THE UNITED STATES

In 1982, due to the level of sophistication in the drug trafficking organizations, the United States recognized that military involvement was necessary to conduct effective counter-drug operations in the United States and along its borders.<sup>51</sup> Following the rationale for involving the U.S. military in counter-drug operations, the United States counter-drug strategy in South America encourages Latin American countries to actively engage their armed forces in narcotics control activities.<sup>52</sup>

In 1989, President George Bush outlined a comprehensive national drug strategy that focused on both national and international fronts. On the international front, the President's Andean Strategy called for a five-year, \$2.2 billion counter-drug effort to augment law enforcement, military and economic resources in Colombia, Bolivia and Peru. The policy encourages each of these countries to militarize their anti-drug efforts and accept United States

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<sup>51</sup> Committee on Government Operations, Military Assistance to Civilian Narcotics Law Enforcement: An Interim Report, Union Calendar No. 576, House of Representatives, Washington, DC, 28 September 1982, 1-3.

<sup>52</sup> Levitsky, The Andean Strategy, 1990.

military training and logistical support, including, at times, a quasi-operational role for U.S. personnel.<sup>53</sup>

As the drug traffickers increasingly utilized Brazil as a transshipment point for drugs to the United States, U.S. officials began to pressure Brazil to sign a counter-drug agreement, similar to the Andean Strategy, with the United States. The primary focus of this pressure was on convincing Brazil of the need to involve the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations.<sup>54</sup>

Evidence of the United States' increased interest in a greater Brazilian counter-drug commitment was conveyed in a speech by Melvyn Levitsky, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Matters, when he stated that Brazil was now "the traffickers' target country."<sup>55</sup> Additionally, further evidence of United States advisors pressuring Brazil into committing their military to the counter-drug effort is apparent in the U.S. Southern Command's (USSOUTHCOM) attempts to conduct joint exercises (US-Brazil) in the Amazon. The United States has designated

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<sup>53</sup> Peter Akin, "The Untied States and Latin America: Good Neighbors Again?" Current History, February 1992, 52.

<sup>54</sup> "Government 'Apprehensive' Over U.S. Drug Role," Folha de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 20 May 1991, translated in FBIS, 24 May 1991, 39.

<sup>55</sup> "Just Say Who:....," The Wall Street Journal, 18 October 1991.

U.S. military units that are playing an active role in counter-drug operations in the Andean countries, as the units to participate in the exercises. Clearly, this strategy is an attempt to illustrate to the Brazilian military how armed forces can play an effective role in counter-drug operations.

The best example of the attempted utilization of this strategy is in the U.S. Navy's South American riverine program. The U.S. Navy has established effective riverine programs in Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia to deny the drug traffickers use of these countries' river networks. However, U.S. Navy and Department of Defense officials readily admit that without Brazilian involvement, the riverine effort is virtually useless. As a result, U.S. military officials lobbied the Brazilians hard to accept a joint riverine exercise in the Amazon. The requests were turned down.<sup>56</sup>

U.S. pressure on the Brazilian government to further the role of its military in counter-drug efforts reached its zenith in the summer of 1991. The issue was widely discussed in the Brazilian press and was a topic of discussion in talks between Presidents Bush and Collor in

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<sup>56</sup> U.S. Navy Officer, interview by author, Monterey, CA, 29 January 1992.

June of 1991.<sup>57</sup> By September of 1991, U.S. pressure on Brazil to further involve their military in counter-drug operations had diminished. For example, in July of 1991 President Collor signed a decree promulgating a mutual cooperation agreement with the U.S. government for fighting drug trafficking. The agreement emphasizes that the United States is committed to providing financial assistance to Brazil's federal police; no further mention is made of involving the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations.<sup>58</sup>

Additionally, in August of 1991, a conference on U.S.-Brazilian cooperation in counter-drug operations was held in Brasilia. The two countries pledged to commit equipment, and human and financial resources to the drug problem. However, Brazil's then foreign minister, Francisco Rezek, explicitly stated that Brazil did not need the presence of U.S. military advisors in the country to help combat the escalating problem of drug trafficking. In response, Melvyn

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<sup>57</sup> "Government 'Apprehensive' Over U.S. Anti-drug Role," Folha de Sao Paulo, 20 May 1991, 39.

<sup>58</sup> "Collor Promulgates 1986 U.S. Anti-drug Agreement," Voz do Brasil Network, in Portuguese, 24 July 1991, translated in FBIS, 25 July 1991, 28.



Levitsky, the US representative, announced that the U.S. had no plans for sending advisors to Brazil anyway.<sup>59</sup>

United States Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney visited Brazil in February of 1992 to discuss, among other things, Brazil's role in combatting the international drug trade. Secretary Cheney's visit illustrated the continued U.S. desire for greater Brazilian military involvement in counter-drug operations, but also reflected a change in the U.S. strategy to convince the Brazilians of their need to involve their military in counter-drug operations. The following statement by Secretary Cheney provides evidence of the evolving U.S. strategy:

I described for our Brazilian hosts the scope of the effort being mounted by the United States military, but also explained that -- just as here in Brazil -- we have a strong tradition in the United States of drawing a line between enforcement, on the one hand, which is the responsibility of our police agencies, and the military role of supporting law enforcement agencies in an effort to control and interdict the flow of narcotics.<sup>60</sup>

Secretary Cheney's statement indicates a U.S. desire for greater use of the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations, but does not advocate the total militarization,

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<sup>59</sup> "Government on Anti-drug Struggle with U.S." Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network, in Portuguese, 14 August 1991, translated in FBIS, 15 August 1991, 21; and "US Anti-drugs Help," Latin American Regional Reports - Brazil, 19 September 1991, 10.

<sup>60</sup> "Secretary of Defense Cheney's Press Conference," United States Information Service, Brasilia, Brazil, 19 February 1992.

as found in the Andean countries,<sup>61</sup> of Brazil's counter-drug efforts. Instead, Secretary Cheney emphasizes a larger support role for the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations, similar to the counter-drug mission of the U.S. military. During an interview with the Brazilian press, Secretary Cheney was explicitly asked whether he suggested to the Brazilian government that the armed forces of Brazil should involve themselves in combatting drugs. An excerpt from Cheney's response was as follows:

That's really a matter for the Brazilian government to decide. I simply shared with the Brazilian officials the extent of our concern and described how we are approaching the problem, and expressed our interest in cooperating with them in every way possible.<sup>62</sup>

Clearly, the United States still desires that the Brazilian military assume a larger role in the counter-drug effort. However, the United States has toned down its efforts in convincing the Brazilians to further involve their military in the counter-drug campaign. For example, the U.S. is no longer committed to the notion that military involvement in counter-drug operations is the best solution to curtail drug trafficking in Brazil. In addition to the

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<sup>61</sup> For example, in Colombia, Bolivia and Peru the United States has emphasized that these countries utilize their armed forces to conduct a military campaign against the drug traffickers. This campaign has included U.S. military advisors and in some cases U.S. military units.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

military solution, Secretary Cheney has allowed for a Brazilian answer to the drug problem; a solution that may not advocate total militarization of Brazil's counter-drug campaign.

The primary reason for the softening of U.S. efforts was that the effects of the previous total militarization policy were becoming counter-productive. For example, the Brazilian military began linking the U.S. desire to conduct joint counter-drug operations with the Brazilian armed forces in the Amazon to an international effort to take over the Amazon. This perception was best illustrated in October of 1991, when Admiral Mario Cesar Flores, Minister of the Navy, stated that no visible military threat to the Amazon existed, but there were signs pointing to military intervention. He claimed these signs were:

- Repeated requests by the United States for the armed forces to participate in military exercises with the Brazilian Navy in the region [which were always turned down].
- Growing participation of U.S. troops with the Colombian armed forces in the counter-drug campaign.

Admiral Flores interpreted these signs as a growing U.S. desire to become acquainted with the theater of operations.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> "Evidence of Foreign Military Intervention Exists," O Globo, in Portuguese, 9 October 1991, translated in FBIS, 11 October 1991, 33-34.

Based on this perspective, U.S. efforts to further involve the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations were not only ineffective, but pushing the Brazilian armed forces further away from accepting the counter-drug mission. Therefore, Cheney's visit can be interpreted as an attempt to reconcile U.S. differences with the Brazilian military over the use of armed forces in counter-drug operations. Nonetheless, U.S. policy still reflects a desire for increased Brazilian military involvement in the counter-drug campaign.

For example, USSOUTHCOM is currently presenting Brazilian military officials with a proposal for a combined (the United States, Brazil, the Andean nations and Venezuela) counter-drug exercise. Specifically, the proposal requests the involvement of Brazilian aircraft and personnel in a combined air interdiction operation against the drug-traffickers. Additionally, the U.S. Navy has incorporated riverine counter-drug training into its annual UNITAS exercise. UNITAS is an annual exercise between U.S. Navy units and their South American counterparts. Brazil is a participant in the exercise and has been asked to participate in the riverine training.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy officer, interview by author, Washington, DC, 1 April 1992.

## B. INTERNAL PRESSURES: BRAZILIAN POLITICAL SOCIETY

Government officials in Brazil have opposed the use of the military in counter-drug operations. They view the counter-drug mission as a function best carried out by the federal police. However, there are some signs that government officials in Brazil would like to see the military assume a larger support role in the counter-drug campaign. The trend in Brazil to commit more resources to the counter-drug campaign is indirectly putting pressure on the military to get involved in anti-drug operations. This pressure results from the military's need to compete for the government's limited financial resources and the government's requirement for the military to justify their financial requirements.

The growing severity of Brazil's drug problem has resulted in a softening of the government's position on allowing the military a greater role in the counter-drug campaign. The Chamber of Deputies Commission for Congressional Investigation (CPI), which investigated drug trafficking in Brazil, recommended that the armed forces participate in the anti-drug fight along Brazil's borders with Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay. Specifically, the CPI recommended that the military reinforce border control and prevent drug trafficking in the



country. CPI Coordinator Deputy Moroni Torgan outlined the military's role as follows:

The armed forces' role in the operation would be to supervise and support the federal police. The federal police role would undoubtedly be to arrest the drug traffickers.<sup>65</sup>

The Brazilian government is also studying plans for the installation of a radar network in the Amazon region to combat both devastation of the jungle and illegal use of the airspace for drug trafficking. Although Brazil is seeking funding for this project from external sources, once installed, the Brazilian Air Force is to take the lead on utilizing the system to control illegal air traffic in the region.<sup>66</sup>

These examples demonstrate both the government's willingness to integrate the military into the counter-drug campaign and the government's increased willingness to allocate additional funds to counter-drug initiatives. However, the Brazilian government seems to be content on limiting the role of the military in the counter-drug campaign and increasing funding to traditional Brazilian law

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<sup>65</sup> "Armed Forces' Role in Anti-drug Effort Discussed," Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network, in Portuguese, 25 September 1991, translated in FBIS, 26 September 1991, 21.

<sup>66</sup> "Government Studying Radar Network for Amazon," Madrid EFE, in Spanish, 28 June 1990, translated in FBIS, 29 June 1990, 30, and "Minister Supports Amazon Air Traffic Control," Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network, in Portuguese, 22 August 1991, translated in FBIS, 27 August 1991, 38.

enforcement agencies. For example, as discussed in Section III, the government has stated that the federal police will be expanded and modernized and more recently the Brazilian Institute for Renewable Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs (IBAMA), the equivalent of the US Environmental Protection Agency, has been allocated the funding to purchase 30 helicopters. These helicopters are to be utilized for controlling illegal activities in the Amazon, including deforestation and drug trafficking.

Additionally, foreign aid accepted by Brazil to fight drug trafficking is distributed primarily to Brazilian law enforcement agencies. With both internal and external funds being utilized to modernize Brazil's law enforcement agencies, it seems that the federal police will have better logistical support than that currently granted to the armed forces.<sup>67</sup> This is a demoralizing prospect for a military that desires to both increase and modernize its forces. The best example illustrating the dilemma created by the Brazilian government's preference for increasing funding to law enforcement agencies at the expense of the military is a proposal to create a Brazilian Coast Guard. This force could be utilized to control Brazil's rivers and coasts and

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<sup>67</sup> "Anti-drug Aspect of Cheney Visit Discussed," O Estado de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 21 February 1992, translated in FBIS, 26 February 1992, 24.

would be a likely candidate for U.S. assistance. However, the creation of a Coast Guard would mean that the Brazilian Navy would have another domestic maritime force to compete with for funding. With the Brazilian government's current penchant for funding anti-drug activities, the Navy is bound to lose the funding battle if a Brazilian Coast Guard is created.<sup>68</sup>

### C. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In summary, it is apparent that current pressures for the Brazilian military to assume a more significant role in the counter-drug campaign are being exacerbated by internal policies. Indirect and direct external pressure from the United States still exists. Indirectly, the United States supports Brazilian initiatives to increase the capabilities of Brazil's law enforcement agencies. More directly, the United States has pressed the Brazilian military to become more involved in counter-drug efforts.

The primary internal pressure on the military stems from the military's need for a role and increased funding at a time of declining budget. As illustrated by the Coast Guard example, counter-drug operations are a legitimate threat to Brazil and the organizations responsible for conducting

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<sup>68</sup> "Creation of A Brazilian Coast Guard," O Globo, 6 March 1992, 4-5.

these operations will receive government funding. The Brazilian military, which has resisted assuming a larger role in counter-drug operations, has been a big loser in recent government budget battles. Military modernization programs have been curtailed and the armed forces have been forced to reduce training drastically.<sup>69</sup>

With the end of the Cold War and apparent stability in most of South America, the Brazilian military has had some difficulty in finding a threat, greater than or equal to the drug trade, that legitimatizes their request for increased funding. It seems that the Brazilian government is prepared to carry on a counter-drug campaign with or without greater support from the military.<sup>70</sup> There is evidence that government officials in Brazil are willing to accept a larger support role for the military in counter-drug operations, but at the same time they are strengthening the law enforcement agencies. This situation puts the onus of assuming a counter-drug mission more on the military than the government.

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<sup>69</sup> "Budget Battle for Military Expenditures Detailed," Folha de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 12 November 1990, translated in FBIS, 19 November 1990, 44. In 1985, Brazil's military budget was approximately .8% of GDP, by 1990 it was only .2% of GDP.

<sup>70</sup> It is important to note that the Brazilian government seems to accept a larger support role for the military in the counter-drug campaign. However, there is no evidence that the government wishes to grant the military extra judicial powers in any counter-drug campaign.

Consequently, it is necessary to examine pressures within the Brazilian military to assume a greater role in the counter-drug campaign and those pressures that resist the counter-drug mission. Section V examines those conflicting pressures.



## V. THE BRAZILIAN MILITARY & THE DRUG PROBLEM

This chapter provides an examination of the Brazilian military and the drug problem. It focuses on the major issues and arguments that are driving the military's institutional debate over assuming a larger role in counter-drug operations. The major arguments for and against greater military participation in the counter-drug campaign are based on the following issues:

- The importance of the Brazilian military remaining a legitimate and important institution in Brazilian society; and
- The importance of not upsetting the balance of civil-military relations.

In order to understand the significance of these issues and the associated arguments, the first section of the chapter reviews Alfred Stepan's theories on the military in newly democratic regimes. Subsequent sections present the competing arguments for a military counter-drug role, and the chapter concludes with an analysis and discussion of the findings.

### A. THEORY

According to Alfred C. Stepan:

There are many dimensions of the problem of civilian democratic control of the military, but two are of particular saliency. One concerns the dimension of

articulated military contestation against the policies of the new civilian democratic leadership. The other concerns the dimension of military institutional prerogatives.

The degree of articulated contestation by the military is strongly affected by the extent to which there is intense dispute or substantial agreement between the military and the government concerning a number of key issues. Two key issues outlined by Stepan are applicable to this study.

They are:

- The military's reaction toward the democratic government's initiatives vis-a-vis the organizational mission, structure and control of the military.
- The military budget, since budget cuts or increases can play a particularly aggravating or ameliorating role.

According to Stepan, continuing high levels of articulated contestation present threats to the continuing existence of the democratic regime. Simply, government and military disagreement over these issues could upset the balance of civil-military relations.

The dimension of military institutional prerogatives is defined by Stepan as follows:

Those areas where, whether challenged or not, the military as an institution assumes they have an acquired right or privilege, formal or informal, to exercise effective control over its internal governance, to play a role within extra-military areas within the state apparatus, or

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<sup>71</sup> Alfred Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1988, 68.

even to structure relationships between the state and political or civil society.<sup>72</sup>

Military prerogatives are classified as low, moderate, or high depending on who exercises the prerogative. For example, if de jure and de facto effective control over the prerogative is exercised by the civilians, through procedures and institutions sanctioned by the democratic regime, then the military's prerogative in this area is low. If the military has de facto and de jure control over the prerogative, it is classified as high, and in cases where the military has been denied a prerogative, but the democratic regime, due to active or passive non-compliance by the military, does not effectively exercise this prerogative, the military's prerogative is classified as moderate. A number of traditionally important Brazilian military prerogatives applicable to this study include maintaining a significant role in the following:

- Internal order.
- The Cabinet (maintaining active duty personnel in ministerial positions).
- The posting of military personnel.
- The coordination of the defense sector.

According to Stepan, maintaining effective control of these prerogatives allows the military to retain significant

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 93.

political influence. For example, through cabinet positions, military officers remain involved in general political issues and have more autonomy over defense initiatives. Additionally, the power to post personnel to certain influential billets affords the military the ability to influence government policy making.<sup>73</sup>

Simply, Stepan's theory is that the relationship between different levels of military contestation and military prerogatives determine the balance of civil military relations. However, military prerogatives and the issues of military contestation also represent matters deemed essential, by the military, for remaining an important and legitimate institution in Brazilian society.

Consequently, Stepan's concepts of military contestation and military prerogatives, and how they relate to civil-military relations and the military institution, are important in analyzing and understanding the relevance of the competing arguments for greater Brazilian military involvement in the counter-drug campaign.

## **B. SEARCHING FOR A NEW ROLE**

After ruling the country for 21 years, the Brazilian military relinquished control of the government to civilian

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<sup>73</sup> For a complete discussion of these prerogatives, see Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics, 103-107.

authorities in 1985. The Brazilian armed forces are the largest in Latin America, but during the 21-year military regime, the armed forces' budget had been among the lowest (in relative terms) in Latin America, falling to less than 0.5 percent of Gross National Product (GNP) in 1985.<sup>74</sup>

The military complained that these low expenditures had left the military with outdated equipment, severe shortfalls in its technical capacity and the inability to project power outside of Brazil. The expansion of Brazil's role in the international arena and the lessons of the Malvinas War indicated it was time to correct the shortcomings of the armed forces.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, Brazilian military leaders welcomed the return to civilian rule, believing that the removal of their governing responsibilities would allow them to focus more directly on the expansion and modernization of the armed forces.

The military's expansion and modernization plan was designed to upgrade and professionalize the armed forces.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> "Military Boost Activity in Field," Brazil 1989 Annual Report on Government, Business and Economy, June 1989, 24.

<sup>75</sup> Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics, 86-87, points out that Argentina's failure against the British task force revealed to the Brazilian military that their forces were also inadequate to fight and defeat another international power.

<sup>76</sup> Samuel Huntington, The Soldier and the State: Theory and Practice of Civil-Military Relations, Boston, MA, Harvard University Press, 1957, states that military professionalism consists of three ingredients: (1) expertness, (2) social



It also emphasized a shift from an internal to an external security role.<sup>77</sup> For example, the army launched a program to increase its operational capacity that emphasized troop carrier helicopters to provide mobility in a conventional land conflict. The navy announced plans to build nuclear-powered submarines and improve their blue water capability; and the air force announced a program to develop air-to-air missiles and a new generation of jet fighters to enhance their air superiority mission.<sup>78</sup>

According to Stepan, these plans did not cause any significant conflict with the new civilian government for the following reasons:

- Military expenditures by world standards had been low.
- The plans had been developed by the military themselves and were accepted by the government and legislature without discussion (this was partially due to the

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responsibility, and (3) corporate loyalty to fellow practitioners. Therefore, professional armed forces are technicians in the management and organization of violence; they feel a responsibility to their client (the state) and they have a powerful corporate tradition and organization.

<sup>77</sup> This shift in roles was in response to the military's need to professionalize. For example, from 1964-85 a major part of the professional identification of the leaders of the Brazilian military had been supplied by their role as direct managers of the polity and their struggle against internal enemies. Shifting to an external security role gave the armed forces a more professional mission and moved them away from the non-military mission of governance. Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics, 86.

<sup>78</sup> For a complete discussion of the military's modernization initiatives, see Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics, 86-89.

civilian desire to see military attention turned to more conventional external defense missions).

- The government did not propose any new ways for civilians to increase their control of the military.<sup>79</sup>

The current lack of any serious external threats combined with Brazil's economic problems have brought the military's expansion and modernization plans to a halt.<sup>80</sup> Of even more concern to the military is the growing debate among Brazilian elites concerning the logic of maintaining the armed forces in their present structure.

The military's dilemma is summed up in the following excerpt from a Sao Paulo newspaper:

The Brazilian Armed Forces are experiencing a crisis. The collapse of communism; the political, cultural and economic rapprochement with Argentina, the most traditional rival of Brazil in the continent; the absence of real foreign enemies; and the high technology employed in the Persian Gulf crisis, which threatens to make the technologically little-advanced arsenal useless, are leaving Brazilian military officers in a state of soul searching.<sup>81</sup>

Based on these conditions, members of the Brazilian Congress have called for a major restructuring of the armed forces. Simply stated, restructuring is defined as reducing

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 88.

<sup>80</sup> For a complete discussion of the economic effects on the military see "Budget Battle for Military Expenditures Detailed," Folha de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 12 November 1990, translated in FBIS, 19 November 1990, 44.

<sup>81</sup> "Armed Forces Said Experiencing Raison D'etre," O Estado de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 8 December 1991, translated in FBIS, 17 December 1991, 32.

the number of troops to adapt the military to the reality of the federal budget. However, the military's modernization plans have also come under attack. For example, Deputy Roberto Campos, a former planning minister under the military regime, said:

The money employed in the construction of the nuclear submarine could be better used<sup>82</sup>, for example, in research to see who is threatening us.

Other members of Congress have adroitly pointed out that although the armed forces receive less funding than most Latin American countries, this money is being used badly. They claim the armed forces have grown too big and bureaucratic, with an inordinate proportion of the military budget being spent on the perquisites granted to senior military officials.<sup>83</sup>

In addition to the legislature's debate concerning military structure and budget reductions, an initiative has recently been approved, by the legislature, to curtail the military's right to take major initiatives in the area of domestic order. In order to increase civilian control of the military, the government has proposed the creation of a

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

single defense ministry; although it is unlikely that such a ministry will be created for some time.<sup>84</sup>

In summary, due to the lack of any serious external threats and Brazil's economic difficulties, the military's control over a number of traditionally important issues and prerogatives is threatened. According to Stepan, in order for the military to remain an important and legitimate institution in Brazilian society, civilian control of these particular issues and prerogatives is essential: (1) government initiatives to alter or reduce the budget, missions, and structure of the armed forces; (2) the military's internal role; and (3) active duty personnel in ministerial positions. The very debate concerning the control of these issues and prerogatives represents a threat to the balance of civil-military relations in Brazil.

The Brazilian military has responded to the debate over its future and funding by presenting a number of scenarios that the armed forces must be prepared to defend against. These scenarios were published by the Escola Superior de Guerra (Brazilian War College) in a document entitled "1990 - 2000 -- Vital Decade." This paper emphasized that the military must be prepared to defend against threats to

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<sup>84</sup> See "Draft Bill on Use of the Armed Forces Approved," O Estado de Sap Paulo, in Portuguese, 11 April 1991, translated in FBIS, 22 May 1991, 21.

the Amazon from drug-traffickers, environmentalists and smugglers. According to the paper, the United States' emphasis on militarizing the drug war is no more than a cover for U.S. intervention in the region. The paper also states that a coalition of "First World" countries and environmental groups might try to occupy the Amazon.<sup>85</sup>

Finally, the paper points out that it is not improbable that in the coming years the police forces might not be able to cope with rising urban crime. In this situation, the military will have to take on the responsibility of neutralizing and destroying criminal elements.<sup>86</sup>

Although it is highly unlikely that a foreign invasion of the Amazon will occur or is even being planned, the military's concern over control of the Amazon and proliferation of crime in the cities is justified. As pointed out in Section II, drug trafficking has expanded in the Amazon region and is undermining social and legal institutions in the country's cities. Additionally, Brazilian troops have been attacked by guerrillas and drug traffickers along the Colombian border and, despite the

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<sup>85</sup> "War is Proposed to Save Amazonia," Latin American Weekly Report, 14 June 1990, 15.

<sup>86</sup> "Clube Militar Warns of Destabilization," Latin American Regional Reports: Brazil, 28 November 1991, 6.



Calha Norte project, military control of this region of the Amazon is insufficient.

A brief analysis of these scenarios illustrates the military's attempts to retain control over the issues and prerogatives that have traditionally been important to them. The scenario illustrating the potential requirement for a military role in controlling crime in Brazil's cities reflects the armed forces' desire to remain involved in ensuring internal order. The threat posed by guerrillas and narco-traffickers along the Amazon border region provides the justification for the military to maintain its current level of funding.

The government's response to these scenarios can be characterized as lukewarm. For instance, there is evidence that President Collor has considered utilizing the military to control crime in Rio de Janeiro, but the "Amazon intervention" scenario is generally viewed as fiction by Collor.<sup>87</sup> Consequently, it is unlikely that these potential threats will provide sufficient justification for the military to expand its prerogatives.

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<sup>87</sup> See "Tinoco Views Strikes, Drug Operations, Bomb," Correio Braziliense, in Portuguese, 12 August 1990, translated in FBIS, 12 September 1990, 40, and "The War of the Idiots," Folha De Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 15 January 1992, translated in FBIS, 27 February 1992, 19.

However, Brazil's drug problem represents a real and immediate danger to national security, and it exacerbates other threats in both the Amazon and the cities. Therefore, emphasizing a larger military counter-drug role, as part of the response to the Amazon and urban threats, could greatly enhance the military's ability to retain control over institutionally important issues and prerogatives.

In summary, accepting a larger role in the counter-drug campaign could provide the military with the justification it needs for maintaining its current level of funding and retaining important military prerogatives. Furthermore, the threat to internal stability posed by guerrillas and narco-traffickers along the Amazon border region makes the counter-drug mission a constitutionally legitimate military role. Finally, the counter-drug role adds a significant amount of realism to the threat scenarios presented by the military. Despite this initial evidence that illustrates the political benefit of the counter-drug role to the armed forces, military officials remain adamant in resisting the anti-drug role.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> For example, when retired army colonel Pericles da Cunha called for the military to reorganize and join the war on drugs, he was thrown in jail for ten days. "Brazil's Brass Fights War of Words," The Washington Post, 14 July 1991.

### C. RESISTING THE COUNTER-DRUG MISSION

The counter-drug mission in Brazil is primarily an internal defense mission. Therefore, an examination of the military's reluctance to become more involved in the counter-drug campaign begins with analyzing the historical precedents that warn against a more pervasive internal defense role for the armed forces.

Examining armed forces initiatives during the height of the military regime's anti-subversion campaign (1969-1972), illustrates the armed forces' concern that assuming a pervasive internal security role could adversely affect the military institution. For example, in 1969, Operascao Bandeirantes (OBAN) was created. It was a combination of civilian police officers and military security officers who carried out a campaign of repression against subversives. Military support for this campaign, however, was far from unanimous. Second Army Commander General Carvalho Lisboa, based in Sao Paulo, refused to cooperate in the creation of OBAN. He and other army skeptics argued that the military were not trained to carry out police functions. Other critics within the army argued that by assuming a police function, the army would jeopardize its ability to carry out its traditional role in Brazilian society. Finally, the critics argued that participating in the repressive apparatus would expose officers to possible corruption.

OBAN squads, for example, had access to cash or valuables seized in raids.<sup>89</sup>

In retrospect, the concerns of General Lisboa and the other skeptics turned out to be valid. Inadequate training in civil police functions led to the brutalization of civilians and repression was extensively used to stifle opposition to government policies. The military was notorious for its use of torture against Brazilian citizens. Torture under the army command was so widespread and institutionalized that no higher military authority could claim non-involvement.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, a high degree of corruption was associated with military personnel involved in anti-subversive activities.<sup>91</sup> Consequently, by the end of military rule, Brazilian society had a very low opinion of the military, and the professional image of the armed forces had been badly tarnished.<sup>92</sup>

These same concerns are also relevant to the debate over increased military involvement in the anti-drug campaign. The military still does not receive training in civil police

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<sup>89</sup> Thomas Skidmore, The Politics of Military Rule, 1964-85, New York, Oxford University Press, 1988, 128.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 128.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>92</sup> For a complete discussion of these consequences, see Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics, 54-59 and Skidmore, The Politics of Military Rule, 267-273.

functions. The involvement of the armed forces in the prosecution of such a pervasive enemy could revive grim memories of the military's repression in the previous anti-subversion campaign.

Additionally, the military's previous fears that participation in internal security affairs would expose the armed forces to corruption are even more relevant when conducting counter-drug operations. As pointed out earlier, drug-related corruption has already penetrated the federal police and the country's legislature. In Peru and Bolivia, where the military takes an active role in combatting the drug traffickers, the armed forces are riddled with corruption.<sup>93</sup> The Brazilian military is not immune to this type of corruption. For example, a Brazilian private makes \$95 per month and a general \$2,768. In Peru, drug traffickers have paid military personnel as much \$60,000 to look the other way on smuggling operations.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Stephen Trujillo, "Corruption and Cocaine in Peru," The New York Times, 7 April 1992, 14. As evidenced by the following excerpt, because of corruption, the Peruvian military's role in anti-drug operations is counter-productive:

The drug war in Peru has long been paralyzed by the Peruvian government's inability to control its own army. The traffickers have forged relationships with senior army officers who do not see cocaine as a threat to national security.

<sup>94</sup> "Army Units Aid Drug Trade in Peru," The Miami Herald, 31 December 1990, 18.



The Brazilian military has demonstrated a real concern for the debilitating effects of drug trafficking on the professionalism of the armed forces and has even implemented a drug awareness program -- Projeto de Esperanca.<sup>95</sup> In summary, the military's desire to professionalize their forces, the corrupting nature of narco-trafficking and the illegality associated with the military's previous law enforcement operations argues against further military involvement in the counter-drug campaign.

A number of social, political, and economic factors have influenced the armed forces' reluctance to become more involved in anti-drug operations. An important social objective of any military organization is to maintain a high level of prestige in the eyes of society and the military institution. The Brazilian military has always afforded itself a high level of prestige. It tries to maintain this level of prestige by:

- Representing Brazil as an international power, by demonstrating that they are an effective modern and professional military power.
- Maintaining a corporate intellectual capacity, through reputable military schools of higher learning.

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<sup>95</sup> U.S. Army Officer, interview with author, Washington, DC, 30 March 1992.

- Rewarding military officials with social perquisites, to emphasize their importance to the military and society.<sup>96</sup>

As evidenced by their modernization plans, the military associates prestige with modern conventional weapons and capabilities. To conduct an unconventional war against drug traffickers is considered belittling to the prestige of the armed forces. Brazilian naval officers find riverine warfare to be a "low" form of naval warfare, not befitting their training, traditions and aptitudes, and the air force shows a similar disdain for counter-insurgency air warfare.<sup>97</sup>

The military's prestige is also threatened by getting involved in a counter-drug war that they might not be able to win. Brazilians interpret the cooperation of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia with U.S. counter-drug efforts as a relationship based on the economic and political weakness of those countries. Therefore, Brazilians believe that extensive cooperation with the United States would be an admission of weakness. Furthermore, despite a significant

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<sup>96</sup> These three notions were compiled from the following references: Jack Child, Geopolitics and Conflict in South America, New York, NY, Praeger Publishers, 1982, 34-41, and Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics, 86-89.

<sup>97</sup> "Amazonas Rex: The Specter of an Amazon Invasion Haunts the Military," InfoBrazil, 1 November 1991, 12. Additionally, discussions with private and public officials who have discussed this issue with Brazilian military officials reveal the same findings.

effort by the United States and the Andean nations, the overall success of the combined counter-drug campaign is dubious. According to U.S. officials the amount of cocaine being produced and shipped out of the Andean region has steadily increased.<sup>98</sup>

Consequently, why should the Brazilian military involve itself in a campaign that has been proven, by a superpower, to be difficult to win? Also, with the likelihood of failure so prominent, the military risks the chance of illustrating that Brazil is no more capable than the Andean countries of controlling drug-trafficking. The military institution could be demoralized by the failure of their actions and society could blame the military for diminishing the country's international stature. A recent example of this was the Argentine military's failure in the Malvinas War.

Another example of military prestige being threatened is related to the disposition of military forces throughout Brazil. For example, approximately 90% of the armed forces are situated in the capitals of the eastern and southern states. These capitals, particularly Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, are the economic, political and cultural centers of Brazil. By being headquartered in these

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<sup>98</sup> U.S. Navy Officer, interview by author, Washington, DC, 30 March 1992.

cities, military officials are in contact with the cosmopolitan sector of Brazilian society. For an institution that perceives itself as a major contributor to Brazil's emergence as a new power in the international arena, remaining in contact with the country's political, social, commercial and intellectual centers is important for prestige.

A military shift toward counter-drug operations would most likely be accompanied by the re-deployment of Brazilian troops from the capital to the Amazon region.<sup>99</sup> This move would reduce the military's prestige by moving it from the center to the periphery of Brazilian society.

Examining the military's lack of interest in the counter-drug campaign from a political perspective is best accomplished by analyzing the military's prerogative for maintaining effective control of internal stability and the political influence associated with it. The analysis is once again focused on the large troop presence in Brazil's cities.

Historically, due to the importance of eastern and southern cities, the military's presence in these cities has afforded them a certain amount of political influence. The

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<sup>99</sup> Since the core of Brazil's drug problem is the drug traffickers' unimpeded use of the Amazon for producing and shipping narcotics, greater military involvement in the anti-drug campaign will most likely be in the Amazon.

military regime headquartered its best troop units and most modern equipment in the country's urban centers, in order to maintain internal stability. Command of the First Army in Rio de Janeiro was considered a coveted assignment.<sup>100</sup> In 1992, the military demonstrated its continued interest in internal stability by patrolling the streets of Rio de Janeiro to deter criminal activity.<sup>101</sup>

Paradoxically, exercising this internal order role affords the military political influence, by increasing its legitimacy in the eyes of the population. For example, the military is given the opportunity to demonstrate its willingness and ability to correct the shortfalls created by government policies (in this case, crime as a result of failing economic plans). Additionally, public support of the military increases as a show of force usually results in a drop in criminal activity. This is important because it associates the military with a positive effect, while the government is plagued by the negative effects of bad economic policies.

Consequently, because of the military's desire to remain involved in ensuring internal stability, and their recent

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<sup>100</sup> Richard Nyrop, ed., Brazil: A Country Study, Washington, DC, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1983, 311.

<sup>101</sup> U.S. Army Officer, interview by author, Washington, DC, 30 March 1992.



and close association with national politics, the deployment of the majority of Brazil's troops in the cities continues to afford the military political influence. Re-deployment of these troops to participate in a counter-drug campaign in the Amazon would reduce that influence.

The military also continues to offer the argument that they cannot join a direct anti-drug fight because they have no funding for it.<sup>102</sup> This statement is true, but it is probably more accurate to argue that the military's reluctance to finance an anti-drug campaign is the result of their desire to develop a modern, conventional warfare capability, and their disdain for unconventional warfare.

Procuring or improving the equipment required for the counter-drug mission would detract from the military's ability to purchase the equipment needed to support the more prestigious conventional warfare missions. For example, the Navy is not interested in building a "brown-water" force of riverine craft that would detract from its blue water mission. The army has illustrated similar prejudices toward unconventional warfare by purchasing French-built Puma and Squirrel helicopters. These helicopters are best suited for

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<sup>102</sup> This argument was presented by Army Chief of Staff General Antonio Moreira in "Cheney Discusses Nuclear Technology, Drugs," Brasilia Radio Nacional do Amazonia Network, in Portuguese, 20 February 1992, translated in FBIS, 21 February 1992, 20.

conventional warfare in Brazil's more temperate climes rather than counter-insurgency operations in a jungle environment. With limited financial resources, the Brazilian military would rather fund the more prestigious conventional warfare requirements rather than finance a counter-drug campaign.

#### **D. LEGITIMIZING GREATER MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNTER-DRUG CAMPAIGN**

This section examines arguments for greater Brazilian military involvement in the counter-drug campaign. Legitimizing the counter-drug role begins with examining Brazil's geopolitical concepts. Geopolitics is simply the relationship between power politics and geography. It reflects the concerns that the diplomat and military planner must keep in mind as they analyze how geographic factors can hinder or enhance their actions in the world arena.<sup>103</sup>

Brazilian geopolitical thought is considered to be the most significant in Latin America. Several geopolitical concepts are adhered to in Brazil. The dominant characteristic of Brazilian geopolitical thinking has been the emphasis on the seemingly inevitable Brazilian path to "grandeza" ("greatness"), the code word for the moment when

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<sup>103</sup> Jack Child, Geopolitics and Conflict in South America, 1982, 19-21.

Brazil will become the first major power to emerge from the Southern Hemisphere.

In order to achieve grandeza, Brazilian geostrategists have primarily followed the geopolitical concept put forth by deceased Brazilian General Golberry do Couto e Silva. Golberry viewed Brazil as an archipelago consisting of a series of isolated islands and peninsulas. In order for Brazil to develop, it must somehow link these various isolated regions together through a network of transportation links. Golberry perceived the internal development of Brazil as a necessary step toward achieving grandeza. Therefore, Brazil's internal development and control of national territories would lead to continental projection and growing international influence. His prescriptions for grandeza included:

- National integration and the effective use of the national territory.
- Interior expansion and peaceful external expansion.
- Containment along the frontier.
- Participation in the defense of western civilization.
- Continental collaboration.
- Cooperation with the developing world.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Jack Child, Geopolitics and Conflict in South America, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1982, 25.

Based on these objectives, the Brazilian military has placed a great emphasis on occupying the country's Amazon region. Historically, control of the Amazon region has always been important to Brazil, and during the 21-year military regime a great emphasis was placed on Amazon development. For example, the military embarked on a massive road building plan to penetrate the Amazon region.

When the military relinquished power in 1985, they announced the implementation of the Calha Norte project and the reorganization of the Amazon command. The reorganization involved the transfer of army units from the strategically important first and third corps, located in the eastern and southern states, to the Amazon. These events illustrate the military's continued high level of interest in the Amazon.

The Calha Norte project and a number of components involved in the reorganization of the Amazon command have been suspended due to the lack of adequate resources, despite the military's geopolitical interest in the Amazon region.<sup>105</sup> In light of recent border incidents with Colombia and Venezuela, the armed forces have recently received additional funding for increasing and improving

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<sup>105</sup> See "Budget Battle for Military Expenditures Detailed," Folha de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 12 November 1990, translated in FBIS, 19 November 1990, 44.

their presence in the Amazon. However, rational occupation of the Amazon is far from complete, and according to General Pacheco, Military Commander of the Amazon,

The Army's force in the Amazon is just a beginning, but it is as big as the nation can presently assign.<sup>106</sup>

The narco-traffickers' unimpeded use of the Amazon region for producing and shipping drugs represents the core of Brazil's drug problem. Therefore, military plans for increasing their control over this region could help to alleviate the country's drug problem. This discussion outlines the symbiotic relationship that exists between greater military involvement in anti-drug operations and the military's geopolitical objective of effectively controlling the Amazon.

The Calha Norte project and the reorganization of the Amazon command demonstrate that the military has developed both the initial infrastructure and its control over the Amazon region. The counter-drug mission could provide the justification to increase funding for the military's plans to achieve control of the Amazon, thereby realizing their geopolitical objectives.

The counter-drug mission also allows the military access to external anti-drug assistance. For example, the United

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<sup>106</sup> "CMA Chief View Army Role in Regions," Folha de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 15 January 1992, translated in FBIS, 27 February 1992, 18.



States offers security assistance to countries that cooperate with the United States in the counter-drug campaign. In many cases, this assistance has included military hardware such as coastal and riverine patrol craft, helicopters, trucks, radios and uniforms. This assistance could allow the military to continue funding for its force modernization and improve its capability to effectively control the Amazon.

In summary, this section has reviewed economic and geopolitical arguments for the Brazilian military to assume a larger role in counter-drug operations. All of the arguments reflect the institutional interests of the armed forces and justify the military's existence and funding requirements by giving it a role in combatting a problem of national significance.

#### **E. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

It is evident that the Brazilian military is primarily concerned with defining a *raison d'etre* that ensures that the armed forces remain a legitimate and important institution in Brazilian society. In order to accomplish these tasks, the armed forces have focused on defining threats that require the preservation of the archaic

structure,<sup>107</sup> traditional missions and prestige associated with the existing military institution. Due to historical precedent, the subversive nature of the drug trade, and threats to military prerogatives, the armed forces have avoided using the counter-drug mission to help define its existence.

However, the seriousness of Brazil's economic problems and the lack of any serious threats are issues that the military cannot ignore. In the context of these issues, it is highly unlikely that the military's current strategy for preserving the prominence of the institution will succeed. For example, maintaining large military forces for defense and prestige is a costly endeavor when no serious external threat exists. Additionally, the Persian Gulf War demonstrated that a large military force no longer guarantees a nation adequate defense. One lesson of the war was that quality and not quantity of forces was essential to the outcome of modern warfare. It is apparent, therefore, that the military's strategy of preserving the archaic structure of the armed forces to ensure the military remains a legitimate and important institution is flawed.

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<sup>107</sup> This refers primarily to Brazil's large military forces, but also includes the current disposition of troops in the cities and southern part of the country (despite a greatly diminished Argentine threat) and the military's continued emphasis on heavy conventional forces.

Furthermore, without including the counter-drug mission, the threat scenarios presented by the armed forces lack the characteristics to preserve the traditional missions and prestige associated with the existing military institution.

Based on this evidence, it can be argued that by including the counter-drug mission in the definition of the military's *raison d'etre* and by discontinuing the strategy of preserving obsolete forces structures and accepting the concept of a smaller quality force, the armed forces are more apt to remain a legitimate and important institution. The following paragraphs outline the new strategy.

The counter-drug mission could enhance military prestige and institutional. To remain a legitimate force, the armed forces cannot ignore the threats to its control over the Amazon border region that the narco-trafficker and guerrillas armies pose. In this case, the military would clearly be defending internal stability against an external threat, therefore the military would retain its prerogative of internal control by defending against a legitimate threat.

Military prestige and legitimacy is further enhanced by linking the counter-drug mission with the geopolitical objective of controlling the Amazon. For example, linking the military with national development (control of the Amazon) rather than fictional threats, enhances society's

view of the military, and the counter-drug mission increases the significance of the military's geopolitical strategy, a valuable source of institutional prestige.

The expansion of the military's role in the counter-drug war could be linked to a smaller, but qualitatively improved military force. Reducing the force could allow for pay increases and more money would be available for properly equipping and training the force. These initiatives could enhance professionalism and reduce the military's susceptibility to the corruption associated with drug trafficking.

Fears that greater military participation in the counter-drug campaign will upset Brazil's civil-military relations are not unfounded. Improving the counter-insurgency capabilities of a military that has previously involved itself in national politics is a risky proposition. However, increased drug trafficking and production could threaten democracy as they have in Colombia. Furthermore, the current debate over the military budget and structure, a debate devoid of the counter-drug issue, also risks upsetting the balance of civil-military relations. The military is losing prerogatives, and current debates over military salaries, advanced weapons programs and the creation of a defense ministry have raised the level of military contestation. A smaller, more professional

military would perhaps be less inclined to intervene in the political arena.<sup>108</sup>

Another step to ensure the proper balance of civil-military relations would be the establishment of a single defense ministry, headed by a civilian. This organization could encourage jointness among the services (beneficial for conducting a multi-faceted counter-drug war and for projecting power) and provide additional oversight of the armed forces. The military has traditionally opposed the idea, but support for a defense ministry is growing within the military.<sup>109</sup>

In summary, the Brazilian military is at a crossroads. A strategy that advocates the preservation of the existing force structure based on traditional external threats, while ignoring the drug threat, is no longer credible. The military has watched traditional external threats dissipate. In contrast, the national drug problem has grown, and provided the justification for modernizing law enforcement agencies and proposing a Coast Guard. Military officers

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<sup>108</sup> Huntington, The Soldier and the State, Harvard, 1957, argues that the surest way to insulate the military from politics is to encourage them to be fully professional.

<sup>109</sup> "New Armed Forces General Staff Chief Sworn In," Rede Globo Television, in Portuguese, 5 January 1990, translated in FBIS, 5 January 1990, 57, and "Document Urges Creation of New Defense Ministry," O Estado de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 19 February 1992, translated in FBIS, 26 February 1992, 23.



stationed in the Amazon region are becoming increasingly aware of the economic and political benefits that the counter-drug mission offers to the armed forces. They are acting against illicit drug trafficking and are in favor of an expanded military role in counter-drug operations. There has also been an interest among Brazilian junior officers to become more involved in the anti-drug effort.<sup>110</sup>

Brazilian military officials are faced with some difficult decisions concerning the future role of the armed forces, but economic and political realities dictate that the military must succumb to the forces of change. The evidence suggests that in order for the armed forces to remain a legitimate and important institution in Brazilian society, more emphasis should be placed on pursuing a strategy that advocates a small, quality force, with greater participation in the counter-drug campaign.

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<sup>110</sup> U.S. Army Officer, interview by author, Washington, DC, 29 March 1992.

## **VI. POTENTIAL MILITARY COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS**

Parts one and two of this thesis (Sections II-V) have suggested that the growing severity of the Brazilian drug problem and the military's institutional crisis indicate that the Brazilian military could become more involved in the counter-drug campaign.

Controlling narco-trafficking and supporting the consolidation of democracy are important internal missions for Brazil and represent the strategic objectives of the United States in the Latin American region.<sup>111</sup> Part three (Sections VI-VII) examines potential military counter-drug missions and how they might affect military professionalism and the balance of civil-military relations. It also discusses the potential role of the United States in supporting Brazilian military involvement in the anti-drug campaign and empowering democracy.

### **A. DEFINING THE BRAZILIAN MILITARY'S FUTURE COUNTER-DRUG ROLE**

In order to define an expanded Brazilian military role in the counter-drug campaign, one must first look at the

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<sup>111</sup> "SOUTHCOM Strategy Process," professional lecture, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, November 1991.

U.S. military role in counter-drug operations. Secretary Cheney, during his visit with Brazilian military officials, stated:

Just as here in Brazil, we have a strong tradition in the United States on drawing a line between law enforcement, on one hand, which is the responsibility of our police agencies, and the military role of supporting law enforcement agencies.<sup>112</sup>

As discussed in Section III, the Brazilian military does assist the federal police in the counter-drug campaign. However, this support was never significant and because of economic constraints and the military's preference for funding advanced weaponry, support for the DPF has been further reduced.<sup>113</sup> An appropriate future role for the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations is support of law enforcement agencies, and not law enforcement.

The Brazilian military's role in counter-drug operations could, therefore, consist of the following missions:

- Air, land and maritime interdiction.
- Manpower, equipment, logistical training and communications support to law enforcement agencies.
- Intelligence operations in support of law enforcement agencies.

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<sup>112</sup> "Secretary of Defense Cheney's Press Campaign," United States Information Service, Brasilia, Brazil, 20 February 1992, 1.

<sup>113</sup> "Budget Battle for Military Expenditures Detailed," Folha de Sao Paulo, in Portuguese, 12 November 1990, translated in FBIS, 19 November 1990, 44.

These missions will be discussed at length in the next section, but it is important to note that support, and not law enforcement, is the role guiding these missions. The works of Samuel Huntington and Alfred Stepan illustrate that allowing the armed forces to arrest people and execute search warrants are contradictory to the goals of democratization and military professionalism. For example, according to Stepan, the Brazilian military's involvement in the legal system is a "high" military prerogative, therefore, potentially disruptive to civilian control of government. Additionally, training the armed forces in the legal requirements of law enforcement detracts resources from the military's training missions that enhance their ability to effectively manage and organize violence. Flying support missions for the DPF, or conducting counter-drug patrols in company with DPF units are missions that do not detract from the military's professional mission.

In order to keep the military's counter-drug role focused on support, Brazil needs to develop a national drug strategy and create an organization to oversee and implement drug control strategies and agencies. The formulation of the new federal drug law and the recommendations of the congressional investigative committee on narcotics indicate that Brazil is on the verge of promulgating a national drug strategy. A National Drug Policy Board, similar to the U.S.

model, consisting of the government cabinet ministers and chaired by the minister of justice, could be created. This board would oversee the development of counter-drug strategies and coordinate counter-drug operations. Current Brazilian counter-drug strategies are twofold, emphasizing both supply and demand reduction. This emphasis is adequate and should remain the same.

The difficulty in making a National Drug Policy Board effective is in coordinating the efforts of the agencies involved in the actual operations. The autonomous nature of the separate military services could be detrimental to joint counter-drug operations. For example, successful interdiction programs depend on timely intelligence and rapid response from prosecuting units. This requires a significant amount of interoperability among the military services, a concept the Brazilian military has not yet mastered. This inadequacy will probably be compounded when trying to coordinate military and civilian joint operations.

One solution to this problem is the appointment of one military commander to coordinate all military support and one lead agency to coordinate joint military/DPF operations. The appointment of one military commander to coordinate all military support to civilian law enforcement agencies will not only improve the effectiveness of counter-drug operations, but could also mark the beginning of the



military's acceptance of a joint military structure. The presence of the separate service chiefs in the Cabinet makes the latter initiative even more important. The military, however, should not be the lead agency to coordinate all counter-drug operations. The legal requirements of the operations dictate that the federal police should remain in charge of coordinating all operations.

Based on the conclusions presented in Section V, it is important to note that the expanded role of the military in counter-drug operations outlined in this section assumes that a future Brazilian military will be smaller than the current force. Additionally, Section II provides evidence that indicates that Brazil's drug problem will become an issue of national security importance. Therefore, anti-drug strategies and operations will receive greater attention.

In sum, an expanded Brazilian military role in counter-drug operations needs to be a component of a more comprehensive national drug strategy. This new role should emphasize support of civilian law enforcement operations and not direct military participation in law enforcement. Furthermore, the military possesses the unique capabilities for an interdiction mission. These missions are discussed in the next section.

## B. POTENTIAL USES OF THE MILITARY IN ANTI-DRUG OPERATIONS

As pointed out in Section III, the DPF is inadequately equipped and manned to conduct effective counter-drug operations, particularly in the remote regions of the Amazon. In order to illustrate how the military can enhance DPF counter-drug operations an examination of specific anti-drug activities is required.

The DPF's inability to effectively prosecute drug trafficking operations in the Amazon border regions with Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia and Peru can be corrected by allowing DPF agents to accompany military patrols in the area. If the military units encounter narco-traffickers and their operations, they could be apprehended and turned over to the DPF agents for prosecution. These operations would alleviate the DPF's manpower shortfalls and allow them to push their law enforcement presence into remote areas, while maintaining control over the towns that have become the conduits for drugs being shipped to eastern Brazil.

Joint DPF/military patrols could be based on the Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) principle utilized by the United States. Simply, by adding two to four DPF personnel to army patrols or naval patrols, the country's counter-drug law enforcement capability is quickly multiplied. Additionally, the military could greatly increase its aviation support to the DPF, providing helicopters to move

DPF agents to remote areas and aircraft (including helicopters) to patrol the rivers and airspace. For example, aircraft could be used to identify coca growing areas, then helicopters could transport agents to the area to destroy the crops.

The proposed air surveillance radar and the dedication of more Brazilian military aircraft to interdiction missions would greatly enhance the country's ability to deny drug traffickers unimpeded access to Brazil's air space. Patrolling Brazil's vast river network is a very large and complex task. However, the navy does have a small "brown water" capability and it has been used effectively to support army actions against guerrillas along the Colombian border.<sup>114</sup> This action suggests that the Brazilians have a rather sophisticated "brown water" capability, including the ability to project and support riverine elements in remote areas of the country. The DPF is currently receiving river patrol craft from the United States and Europe; this force could be used in conjunction with military units to interdict drug traffickers on Brazil's rivers. The Brazilians could utilize this mobile riverine force by

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<sup>114</sup> In March 1991, the navy deployed two patrol boats and a gunboat on which helicopters could land to reinforce the Colombian border after guerrilla raids into Brazil. "Border with Colombia Reinforced Following Raids," Madrid EFE, in Spanish, 11 March 1991, translated in FBIS, 13 March 1991, 31.

moving it to critical nodes in the Amazon river network, then conducting operations for a designated period of time. Again, the LEDET concept applies.

The DPF needs assistance in resolving the smuggling of drugs through the Amazon port of Manaus and the coastal port of Belem (outlet of the Amazon River). The drugs are smuggled through these ports in cargo containers. The high volume of shipping through these areas presents a problem of massive proportions to the DPF. They simply do not have the manpower to inspect a large percentage of the containers. Increasing these inspection rates would help reduce the flow of drugs into Brazil's cities and out of the country. The military could provide additional manpower to assist the DPF in providing a higher rate of container inspections.

The intelligence that the military can provide the DPF is invaluable to increasing the effectiveness of any of the previously-discussed missions. According to US government officials interviewed for this study, the Brazilian military has an extensive intelligence network in the Amazon and possesses the equipment necessary for sophisticated intelligence operations. For example, military units are specifically trained and equipped to conduct reconnaissance and collect intelligence on targets. The DPF has no such capability. Therefore, the military can provide direct and indirect intelligence support to the DPF. Direct support

could be comprised of conducting actual intelligence gathering operations in support of DPF counter-drug operations and the sharing of drug-related intelligence with the DPF. Indirect support could consist of the training of DPF personnel in intelligence work and the assignment of intelligence officers to DPF units.

Finally, the Brazilian military could increase its training support to the DPF. This can be done by either sending DPF agents to military bases for training or by attaching military personnel to DPF units for training in the field. However, because of the fine line between operations and training while in the field, the training of DPF agents at military bases is a better idea.

### **C. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION**

Increasing the military's involvement in counter-drug operations and at the same time respecting the potential problems of decreasing military professionalism and upsetting the balance of civil-military relations is best accomplished by expanding the military's current role of providing the DPF direct support in the anti-drug campaign. The military infrastructure and plans for accomplishing this expansion already exist. For example, the full implementation of the Calha Norte project and the existence



of the Brazilian jungle warfare school<sup>115</sup> both support initiatives discussed in this chapter.

Political issues and the institutional resistance discussed throughout this study will make this expanded military role difficult to implement. Additionally, institutional competition between the DPF and military over their proper roles in society is quite high. DPF director Tuma opposes further military involvement in the counter-drug campaign, claiming his forces can prevail with additional aid. The issue here, however, is not just competition for institutional prestige, but competition primarily for economic assets. The DPF's budget grows and the military's shrinks. Additionally, the support and logistical structure (including aircraft and boats) of the DPF is growing rapidly. Therefore, DPF resistance to an expanded military role in counter-drug operations is likely to continue based on the fact that it will deprive them of increasing the prominence of their institution. For example, if the military increases logistical support to the DPF, domestic funds are no longer required to enhance the DPF's support structure. These funds could then be utilized for a demand reduction program.

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<sup>115</sup> The school is located in Manaus and is designed to teach jungle survival skills and counter-insurgency techniques.

However, if the Brazilians are serious about controlling their country's burgeoning drug problem, and the military desires to remain a professional organization, expanding the military's current role in the counter-drug war can assist in the accomplishment of these objectives.

## **VII. ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES**

This section discusses the role of the United States in supporting Brazilian military involvement in the anti-drug campaign and in encouraging the consolidation of democracy in Brazil.

### **A. FORMULATING A STRATEGY**

The U.S. drug policy toward Brazil is based on Brazil's role as a major transit country for cocaine and a major producer of precursor chemicals. The U.S. strategy is simple -- its main objective is to curtail the flow of drugs to the United States. Implementation of this strategy is based on providing direct assistance to the DPF to promote the investigation and elimination of international illicit narcotics organizations, the reduction in the flow of narcotics through Brazil, and disruption of illegal precursor chemicals. Additionally, the United States provides assistance to Brazilian government programs in drug awareness, education and prevention, and has advocated the use of the Brazilian military in the anti-drug campaign. It is also important to note that the number one priority of

the United States in South America is the promotion of democracy.<sup>116</sup>

The main purpose of Brazil's counter-drug objectives is to protect the nation from the debilitating effects of the drug trade. Accomplishment of these goals has primarily been through law enforcement and public awareness initiatives. Additionally, civilian leaders are dedicated to the continued process of democratization in Brazil.

As previously discussed, Brazil and the United States have signed a bilateral agreement concerning cooperation in anti-drug efforts. Under the agreement, the United States is committed to providing financial assistance to Brazil to undertake actions aimed at repressing and preventing the use of drugs and rehabilitating drug addicts. Additionally, it provides for an exchange of experts and meetings between experts from both countries, whenever necessary in order to trade information on fighting and repressing drug trafficking.<sup>117</sup> Based on the previous review of each

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<sup>116</sup> "Western Hemisphere Holds Unique Place For Freedom," U.S. Department of State Dispatch, 10 June 1991. This U.S. position is evident in the following statement to the Organization of American States (OAS) by Deputy Secretary of State Eagleburger:

Our challenges [in the hemisphere] are clear...First, we must consolidate democracy and be prepared, where necessary, to defend democracy against its enemies.

<sup>117</sup> "Collor Promulgates 1986 U.S. Antidrug Agreement," Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network, in Portuguese, 24 July 1991, translated in FBIS, 25 July 1991, 28-29.

country's efforts, it seems apparent that a U.S.-Brazil agreement would be mutually beneficial. However, a disagreement over the use of Brazil's armed forces in counter-drug operations has created serious tensions in the U.S.-Brazil relationship. This disagreement stems primarily from the level of interest each country affords the problem. The United States has recognized drug trafficking to be an issue of national security. However, Brazil has yet to give the drug issues such a high priority, but the rapid growth and pervasiveness of the problem has increased national attention on the drug issue.

Drug trafficking is a transnational problem that is devastating to every country involved and none of them can avoid dealing with the problem. Therefore, based on the characteristics of the drug problem, a multilateral or regional rather than a bilateral strategy to fight the drug traffickers is needed. For example, today nearly all South American countries are linked by bilateral agreements on the prevention of illegal drug trafficking and trade. Such agreements, however, are virtually meaningless given the shortages of equipment and manpower in the suppression organizations. What is needed by the nations of the western hemisphere is a strategy similar to that used to counter



international terrorism.<sup>118</sup> The countries must recognize the transnational nature of the drug problem, and respect issues of national sovereignty in countering the problem.

A strategy based on these principles would have a regional focus. This could reduce the tensions created by the differing levels of interest that individual nations afford to the drug problem. This type of strategy allows the United States to pursue both its objectives of curtailing the illegal drug trade and promoting democracy in Latin America. By simply focusing on the U.S. national security objective of stemming the flow of drugs northward, the goal of promoting democracy in the region is jeopardized. The risk is primarily in strengthening military organizations that have a history of intervening in their country's political process, to combat the drug traffickers. For example, increasing the power of some South American militaries may encourage them to marginalize civilian government. Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Brazil all have a history of military rule.

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<sup>118</sup> There a number of treaties of cooperation concerning the control of international terrorism, however, the most relevant examples are (1) The International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages, promulgated 17 December 1979, and (2) Convention to Prevent and Punish Acts of Terrorism Taking the Form of Crimes Against Persons and Related Extortions That are of International Significance, signed in the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1971.

Respect of national sovereignty is extremely important in dealing with Brazil. Brazilians seem to still believe in the concept of "absolute sovereignty" and are extremely sensitive to any rhetoric or actions that hint at a violation of Brazilian sovereignty.<sup>119</sup> Brazilian sensitivities over the sovereignty issue further suggest that a regional counter-drug strategy is the correct policy for the United States to pursue in Brazil and Latin America.

#### **B. IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY**

Pursuing a regional strategy to support an expanded Brazilian military role in the counter-drug campaign and ensure the continuation of the democratic process in Brazil is best accomplished by expanding current U.S. initiatives. The U.S. military enjoys a unique and traditional relationship with their Brazilian counterparts. During World War II, a Brazilian Expeditionary Force fought under the command of American General Mark Clark in the Italian campaign. Following World War II, a military agreement was signed by both countries and they enjoyed a relationship of cooperation until 1977, when Brazil unilaterally severed the agreement. This was due to U.S. criticism of Brazil's human

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<sup>119</sup> Good examples of this are the Brazilian apprehension over the U.S. military presence in the Andean countries and the radical responses to international environmental concerns over the depletion of the Amazon rain forest.

rights record and U.S. attempts to block Brazil's nuclear power development program.<sup>120</sup> However, high level contacts between the two militaries occur annually. Brazil is the only country in Latin America that conducts army-to-army staff talks with the United States and a yearly seminar is held to commemorate U.S.-Brazil cooperation during WWII. Additionally, Brazilian forces participate in the annual UNITAS exercise. UNITAS is a combined U.S. and Latin American exercise that promotes interoperability among the region's forces. It is primarily a naval exercise. There is also a high level of personnel exchange between the two countries. U.S. personnel attend Brazil's war college and jungle survival school and Brazilian personnel attend similar U.S. military schools.

These contacts could be utilized to illustrate to Brazilian military officers the benefit and utility of involving the military in counter-drug operations. Although the U.S. military has no history of involving itself overtly in national politics, it does share similar Brazilian military experiences in enforcing internal order. For example, U.S. military forces have been utilized in domestic security operations in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957; in the Watts riots of 1965; during disturbances in Washington, DC

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<sup>120</sup> Richard Nyrop, Brazil: A Country Study, 1983, 283.

in 1971; and most recently in Los Angeles, California. It could be beneficial to demonstrate to Brazilian officers how the U.S. military, which is not fond of intervening in civil affairs, has assisted the government in ensuring internal order and maintained a high level of professionalism.

The continuation of combined exercises such as UNITAS can assist in enhancing military professionalism. UNITAS provides Brazilians with the opportunity to exercise their conventional forces with the region's other major powers. This is important because combined exercises allow militaries to demonstrate their capabilities to one another.

The United States should avoid providing the Brazilian military direct counter-drug assistance, such as equipment that could be used for other military purposes. For example, much of the U.S. military equipment supplied to the Colombian armed forces is used to combat guerrilla forces and not necessarily drug traffickers, indicating that the Colombian military may have its own plans for U.S. counter-drug assistance. Counter-drug operations are law enforcement operations and the emphasis of U.S. aid should continue to be on enhancing the capabilities of Brazil's civilian law enforcement agencies. By continuing to assist Brazilian law enforcement agencies, U.S. aid affords the Brazilian government additional latitude in determining a future role for the Brazilian military in counter-drug

operations. U.S. policy toward Brazil should emphasize the promotion and support of democratic principles and this policy should guide counter-drug operations.

This study has demonstrated that internal and institutional pressures will lead to greater Brazilian involvement in counter-drug operations. With the existence of these Brazilian pressures for greater military involvement in counter-drug operations, U.S. objectives are best accomplished by supporting democratic initiatives.



## VIII. CONCLUSION

The introduction raised a number of questions that were addressed throughout the thesis. These issues relate to (1) the scope of the drug problem in Brazil; (2) the external, internal and institutional pressures that are driving the Brazilian military to assume a larger role in counter-drug operations; (3) the proper role of the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations; and (4) the role the United States should play in a Brazilian counter-drug strategy. This section will summarize the answers to these questions and provide recommendations for further research.

### A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The drug problem in Brazil is no longer limited to the country's role as a transshipment route to drug markets in the United States and Europe. Drug traffickers are beginning to move their operations into Brazil and are increasingly directing their illicit product at a growing Brazilian consumer market. The consequence of the illegal drug trade -- corruption, violence, drug abuse -- are becoming more and more visible and Brazilian initiatives, such as the congressional inquiry into the problem and the proposed anti-drug law, indicate that Brazil's drug problem

is becoming an issue of national importance. The problem is rapidly becoming a threat to Brazil's national security and additional resources are required to curtail its expansion. In the long term, Brazil needs to develop a comprehensive counter-drug strategy. Without the immediate dedication of the resources required to defeat the drug traffickers, Brazil could become another Colombia. The military could provide this needed immediate response.

Due to the national security concerns of the United States, external pressure from the United States was, initially, the primary source of pressure for Brazilian military involvement in counter-drug operations. With the increasing severity of Brazil's drug problem and the identity crisis faced by the military, internal factors are pressing for greater military involvement in counter-drug operations. The military's desire to remain an important and professional institution indicates that in addition to increasing their role in the counter-drug campaign, they may accept changes and reductions in their force structures. Although changes in the force structures and roles of the Brazilian military represent a source of tension in civil-military relations, it is also possible that these changes could strengthen democratic rule and further professionalize the military.

The proper role of the Brazilian military in counter-drug operations should be an expansion of its current role. The military should provide increased communications, intelligence, logistical and training support to Brazilian law enforcement agencies, but should avoid direct involvement in actual law enforcement operations. Additionally, the military can greatly enhance air and riverine interdiction efforts in the country's Amazon region.

Control of the military forces in counter-drug operations will be a critical issue to resolve. At the strategic level, the multi-faceted requirements of anti-drug operations dictate that military support should be coordinated by a joint military staff subordinate to the minister of justice. At the tactical level, joint military/DPF operations will greatly increase the state's ability to enforce anti-drug laws throughout Brazil. However, these issues of control exacerbate historical institutional animosities between the DPF and the military and heighten the civil-military debate over creating a single defense ministry.

Based on the transnational nature of illicit drug trade, the United States should emphasize a regional counter-drug strategy. In the case of Brazil, this translates into respecting its sovereignty and supporting and strengthening

Brazilian counter-drug initiatives. The civil-military implications associated with a greater Brazilian military role in counter-drug operations and the U.S. strategic objective of promoting democracy indicate that the United States should support democratic initiatives in Brazil. Specifically, the United States should use military-to-military contacts to illustrate the institutional and national benefits of an expanded counter-drug role. The United States should also support civilian control of government by providing assistance to strengthen traditional law enforcement capabilities.

#### **B. AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This thesis has demonstrated that internal and institutional forces will lead to greater Brazilian military involvement in the counter-drug campaign. However, a number of issues require further research. First, there is a need to determine if there is support within the military for an expanded counter-drug role. There are some indications that differences exist between military officers stationed in the Amazon, who support an expanded role, and officers in the high command, located in the cities, who are less supportive.

Second, the issue of who would control Brazilian military units involved in counter-drug operations needs to

be more thoroughly examined. The debate concerning the creation of a defense ministry could provide some insight into how much authority the military is willing to concede to civilians.

Finally, a more comprehensive study of how Brazil would fit into a regional counter-drug strategy is needed. For example, what is the likelihood of the Amazon Pact signatories agreeing to a combined counter-drug campaign in the Amazon Basin, including coordinated riverine operations and a cooperative air interdiction effort? These and related questions should be explored.



# APPENDIX A

## MAP OF BRAZIL



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